

Chapter I

**Authority and Functions
of
Joint Force Land Component Commander**

SCOPE

I-1. This handbook is designed for planning and conducting land operations requiring the close coordination of Army forces (ARFOR) and Marine Corps forces (MARFOR) under the control of a joint force land component commander (JFLCC) within the joint operations area (JOA). Joint force land component (JFLC) command operations addressed are primarily those involving large forces to include Army divisions and Marine expeditionary forces (MEFs) and the conduct of operations outside of an amphibious objective area (AOA), if designated. This handbook is also useful for planning and conducting land operations across the range of military operations and in multinational environments.

PURPOSE

I-2. Formation, functions, and organization of the JFLC command are addressed herein. Also discussed are the operational questions of who, what, when, and how of JFLC command operations in support of a campaign by a joint force commander (JFC). Joint doctrine establishes that the JFLCC option is available to the JFC. However, the doctrine necessary for planning and executing the JFLCC concept is still evolving. This United States Army (USA)/United States Marine Corps (USMC) handbook provides information and guidance to assist readers in the forming, planning, training, and execution of the JFLCC concept.

Functional component commands can be appropriate when forces from two or more Military Departments must operate in the same dimension or medium or there is a need to accomplish a distinct aspect of the assigned mission.

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ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDER

I-3. Unified action demands maximum interoperability. The forces, units, and systems of all Services achieve interoperability through collective efforts to develop and use joint doctrine; joint tactics, techniques, and procedures; and through the conduct of joint training. Joint forces can be established on either a geographic or functional basis. JFCs have the authority to organize forces to best accomplish the assigned mission based on their concept of operations (CONOPS). The organization should be sufficiently flexible to meet the planned phases of the campaign or major operation and any development that necessitates a change in plan. It should also optimize the capabilities of each component while maintaining the requisite unity of effort to attain the military objectives.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

I-4. Unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense (SecDef), the authority, direction, and control of the commander of a combatant command (COCOM), with respect to the commands and the forces assigned to that command, are shown in Figure I-1.

- Giving authoritative direction to subordinate commands and forces necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics.
- Prescribing the chain of command to the commands and forces within the command.
- Organizing commands and forces within that command as necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Employing forces within that command as necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Assigning command functions to subordinate commanders.
- Coordinating and approving those aspects of administration, support (including control of resources and equipment, internal organization, and training), and discipline necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command.
- Exercising the authority with respect to selecting subordinate commanders, selecting combatant command staff, suspending subordinates, and convening courts-martial as delineated in Chapter 6, title 10, US Code.

Figure I-1. General Functions of a Combatant Commander

AUTHORITY OVER SUBORDINATE COMMANDERS

I-5. Unless otherwise directed by the President or the SecDef—

- Commanders of commands and forces assigned to a combatant commander are under the authority, direction, and control of, and are responsible to, the combatant commander.
- The subordinate commander communicates with other elements of the Department of Defense (DOD) on matters the combatant commander is assigned authority for in accordance with procedures, if any, established by the combatant commander.
- Other elements of DOD communicate with the subordinate commander on matters the combatant commander is assigned authority for in accordance with established procedures.
- The subordinate commander advises the combatant commander, if so directed, of all communications to and from other elements of DOD on matters the combatant commander has not been assigned authority for.

A joint force commander (JFC) is a combatant commander, subunified commander, or joint task force (JTF) commander authorized to exercise combatant command (command authority) or operational control over a joint force.

FUNCTIONAL COMPONENT COMMAND AUTHORITY

I-6. Combatant commanders and commanders of subordinate unified commands and JTFs have the authority to establish functional component commands to control military operations. Functional component commands may be established across the range of military operations to perform operational missions that may be of short or extended duration. The JFC has the authority to establish and designate a JFLCC. Functional component commands do not constitute a “joint force” with the authorities and responsibilities of a joint force as described in the United Action Armed Forces (UNAAF). Normally, the Service component commander with the

majority of forces, and requisite command and control (C²) capabilities, is designated as the functional component commander. However, the JFC considers the mission, nature and duration of the operation, force capabilities, and the C² capabilities in selecting a commander.

I-7. The responsibilities and authority of a functional component command are assigned by the establishing JFC. The establishment and designation of a functional component commander must not affect the command relationships between Service component commanders and the JFC.

I-8. The JFC must designate the military capability and forces that will be made available for tasking by the functional component commander and the appropriate command relationship(s) the functional component commander exercises over the forces provided.

I-9. When a functional component command will employ forces from more than one military department, the staff should be representative of the land forces that comprise the land component command.

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

I-10. The authority vested in a commander is commensurate with the responsibility assigned. Forces, not command relationships, are transferred between commands. When forces are transferred, the command relationship the gaining commander exercises (and the losing commander relinquishes) over those forces must be specified. The four levels of command relationships used for US military forces are—

- Combatant command.
- Operational control (OPCON).
- Tactical control (TACON).
- Support.

These command relationships are discussed in detail in Chapter II.